California Board of
Barbering and Cosmetology

Board Meeting
Minutes of April 6, 2026

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT
Tonya Fairley, President
Danielle Munoz, Vice President
Michelle Edgar
Megan Ellis
Dr. Yolanda Jimenez
Tamika Miller
Calimay Pham
Steve Weeks

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT
Kristy Underwood, Executive Officer
Allison Lee, Board Project Manager
Sabina Knight, Legal Counsel
Monica Burris, Executive Analyst

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT
Anthony Bertram
Sinar Lomeli

1. Call to Order/ Roll Call/ Establishment of Quorum

President Tonya Fairley convened the meeting at approximately 9:30 am. A roll call confirmed the presences of a quorum.

2. Review, Discussion, and Possibly Approval Regarding the Sunset Review Hearing Responses

President Tonya Fairley opened the discussion by sharing that representing the Board at the Sunset review hearing was an intense and educational experience, describing it as "the most intense 10 minutes of my life". She thanked Kristy Underwood and the staff for their work over the last few years. Ms. Underwood explained that the Board received the legislative questions only the day before the hearing and was legally required to submit formal, Board-approved responses within 30 days of that date.

Issue 1: Duplicative Exam Costs. Ms. Underwood addressed the duplicative costs the Board faces by paying both the exam vendor (PSI) for occupational analysis required by their $1–2 million contract and the Office of Professional Examination Services (OPES) due to BPC Section 139. She presented a chart showing expenses from 2019 to 2026. President Fairley and Ms. Underwood agreed that this is an unnecessary cost impacting all DCA boards that requires further legislative discussion, noting there appears to be no immediate solution other than to evaluate it.

Issue 2: Timeline and Delays in Regulations. Ms. Underwood responded to inquiries about the slow pace of regulation implementation, citing delays caused by the quarterly board meeting schedule, which necessitates a three-month wait for any language changes. Additional delays stem from the regulations specialist position being vacant since approximately October of the previous year and currently undergoing

reclassification. Councilmember Danielle Munoz asked if a committee could approve changes to expedite the process; Ms. Underwood clarified that changes must return to the full Board.

Issue 3: Licensing Requirements (LLCs). Ms. Underwood discussed supporting explicit authority to license Limited Liability Companies (LLCs) and requiring establishments to demonstrate good standing with the Secretary of State, noting the Board currently oversees over 5,000 LLCs but the law is vague. Councilmember Steve Weeks raised concerns about establishment owners with revoked licenses re-entering the system as managers by using an LLC shield. Ms. Underwood confirmed that once the necessary statutory section is in law, the Board can draft regulations to explicitly prevent revoked individuals from hiding behind corporate entities.

Issue 4: School Oversight Fees. Ms. Underwood proposed new statutory fees for schools—a $575 initial application fee and a $175 biennial renewal fee—to offset the approximate $445,000 annually spent on staff resources for overseeing 273 schools, for which the Board currently receives no dedicated funding. Public commenter Fred Jones argued that the Board's response was "weak sauce" and urged a stronger demand for sole oversight of schools, noting that the BPPE has failed to protect students. The Board later decided to amend its official response to explicitly state that it "wants to emphasize that we are the appropriate entity to have sole oversight of our schools".

Issue 5: Combined Licenses. Ms. Underwood noted that offering combined licenses (Barbering/Cosmetology and Manicuring/Esthetics) has minimal exam development costs since PSI already has the occupational analysis, but could result in a potential $1.4 million loss in revenue. Less than 1% of the current licensee population holds a combined license, though demand is expected to grow. President Fairley asked if a higher fee could offset the deficit; Ms. Underwood clarified that by law, the Board can only charge the actual cost to process the application.

Issue 6: Licensure by Endorsement Fraud. Ms. Underwood highlighted significant nationwide fraud in licensure by endorsement, noting a massive spike in New York certification letters, which jumped from 187 in 2021 to over 1,000 in 2025. Applicants often fraudulently obtain a New York license from out-of-country and immediately seek a transfer to California, bypassing minimal competency requirements and severely risking consumer harm. Washington state saw a similar problem peak in 2024.

Issue 8: Criminal History and Fingerprinting. The Board strongly opposes mandatory fingerprinting, explaining that it would create a massive barrier for reentry programs, such as those in state correctional facilities, LA Probation, and Napa State Hospital. Ms. Underwood stated that adding the costs of fingerprinting deters potential students with minor convictions from entering school. President Fairley strongly agreed, noting it would be pointless to encourage reentry only to stop them with background checks.

Issue 9: Spanish Examination Pass Rates. Ms. Underwood reported that the Board has exhausted its options, including translations and DIF reports, and believes the root cause of the pass rate disparity is likely the quality of education, which falls under the BPPE's jurisdiction.

Issue 12: Industry Evolution and Invasive Procedures. The Board detailed its evaluation process for new trends and devices to prevent invasive procedures, noting that the Disciplinary Review Committee (DRC) evaluates specific services and that Sections 7320 and 991 prohibit the practice of medicine and invasive procedures. Councilmember Megan Ellis suggested adding a scope-of-practice disclaimer to license renewals. Public commenter Jaime Schrabeck suggested the Board emphasize its use of 'industry bulletins' to quickly clarify safety standards.

Motion: The Board moved to approve the responses to the Sunset Report with the addition to #4 which shall read 'The Board wants to emphasize that we are the appropriate entity to have sole oversight of our schools', to add to #14 at the end of the first sentence 'considering the level of high risks associated with the barbering and cosmetology service', and motion to delegate authority to the executive officer to make any non-substantive changs to the language.

Public Comment: Public comment was received from Fred Jones, who urged the Board to forcefully push back against language framing licensure as a "barrier to employment," arguing that the Board's regulatory oversight is the reason consumer harms aren't more severe.

Roll Call Vote: Motion to approve the amended 2026 Sunset Review Hearing Responses carried: 8 yes, 0 no, and 0 abstain, per the following roll call vote:

- Board Members voted "Yes": Tonya Fairley, Kellie Funk, Michelle Edgar, Megan Ellis, Dr. Yolanda Jimenez, Tamika Miller, Danielle Munoz, Calimay Phan, Steve Weeks

3. Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda

Public Comment: An unknown male caller (5303) recommended that the Board and lawmakers review the Melanie Armstrong case in Alabama and the movie 'Freedom Hair'. The caller advocated for occupational licensing reforms, stating that deregulation could open up the economy and benefit workers. The Moderator thanked the caller.

4. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned.